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Thirty years of Broughton

Place Church

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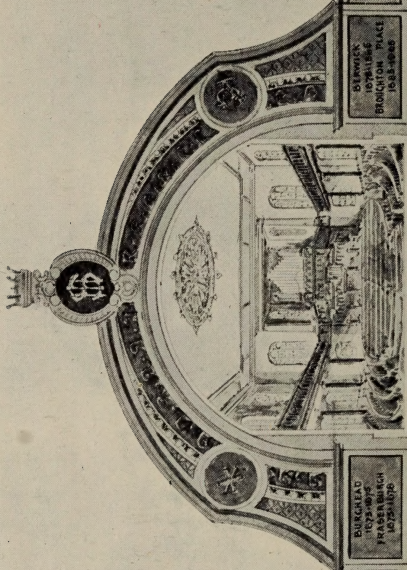
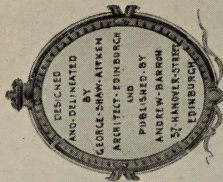
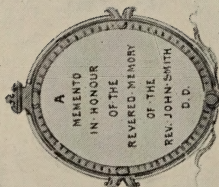




**Thirty Years of  
Broughton Place United Free Church  
Edinburgh**







MINISTERS OF BROUGHTON PLACE CHURCH

REV. JAMES HALL, D.D.  
1706-1836  
REV. JOHN BROWN, D.D.  
1839-1888

BURGHEAD  
1825-1865  
FRASERBURGH  
1875-1878

GLASGOW  
1871-1886  
BRIGHTON PLACE  
1888-1888

REV. ANDREW THOMPSON, D.D.  
1842-1901  
REV. JOHN SMITH, D.D.  
1863-1905

MINISTERS OF BROUGHTON PLACE CHURCH

ST. SMITH'S MINISTRY

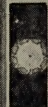
INTERIOR OF BROUGHTON PLACE CHURCH

ST. SMITH'S MINISTRY

MINISTERS OF BROUGHTON PLACE CHURCH



"THE PERMANENT MESSAGE OF THE EKKLESIA"



THEY THAT BE NIGH SHALL SHINE AS THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE SUN  
AND THEY THAT TURN AWAY TO RIGHTEONNESS  
AS THE STARS FOR EVER AND EVER




"THE INTEGRITY OF SCRIPTURE"  
"THE MAGISTRAL OF CONFESSION"

LITERARY WORKS OF ST. JOHN SMITH

LITERARY WORKS OF ST. JOHN SMITH





EGYPT



WALLACE GREEN CHURCH  
BIRMINGHAM

**JOHN SMITH D.D.**  
FOURTH MINISTER  
OF THIS CONGREGATION  
INDUCTED 26<sup>th</sup> MARCH 1888  
DIED 15 DECEMBER 1905  
A FAITHFUL MINISTER  
OF CHRIST  
AND  
A MAN GREATLY BELOVED

W. G. BRISTOL, M.A.  
SECRETARY

**PRECHES**  
OF—THA  
R. DILLON  
PERIODICAL

**ADDRESSES**  
WHICH HE  
DELIVERED  
ALL BIRMINGHAM  
WITH EIGHT  
SP. BIRTH  
TRUTH  
SHED  
THAT HE  
KNEW THE  
SECRET  
FATHERS

**KINGS**  
CATHOLIC  
WALLACE  
JER. WHO  
WELCOME  
TO  
CLUB  
PARK  
THE  
BOYS  
OF  
SCHOOL  
AND THE  
LADIES  
OF THE  
VALLEY

**JERUSALEM**

**DAUGHTER CONGREGATIONS**

JAMAICA  
NEW BRUNSWICK  
OLD CALABAR  
INDONESIA

**INDIA**  
NARAYAN  
SICILY  
SICILY

**LEADING**

PRINCIPAL  
CLERICS

**MINISTRY**

PROFESSOR  
LADIE  
PROFESSOR  
JOHN C. P.

**SESSION CLERKS**

ALEXANDER WHITE AND W. W. WALLACE

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JOHN CHURCH THE CHURCH KITCHEN



# Thirty Years of Broughton Place Church

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1914

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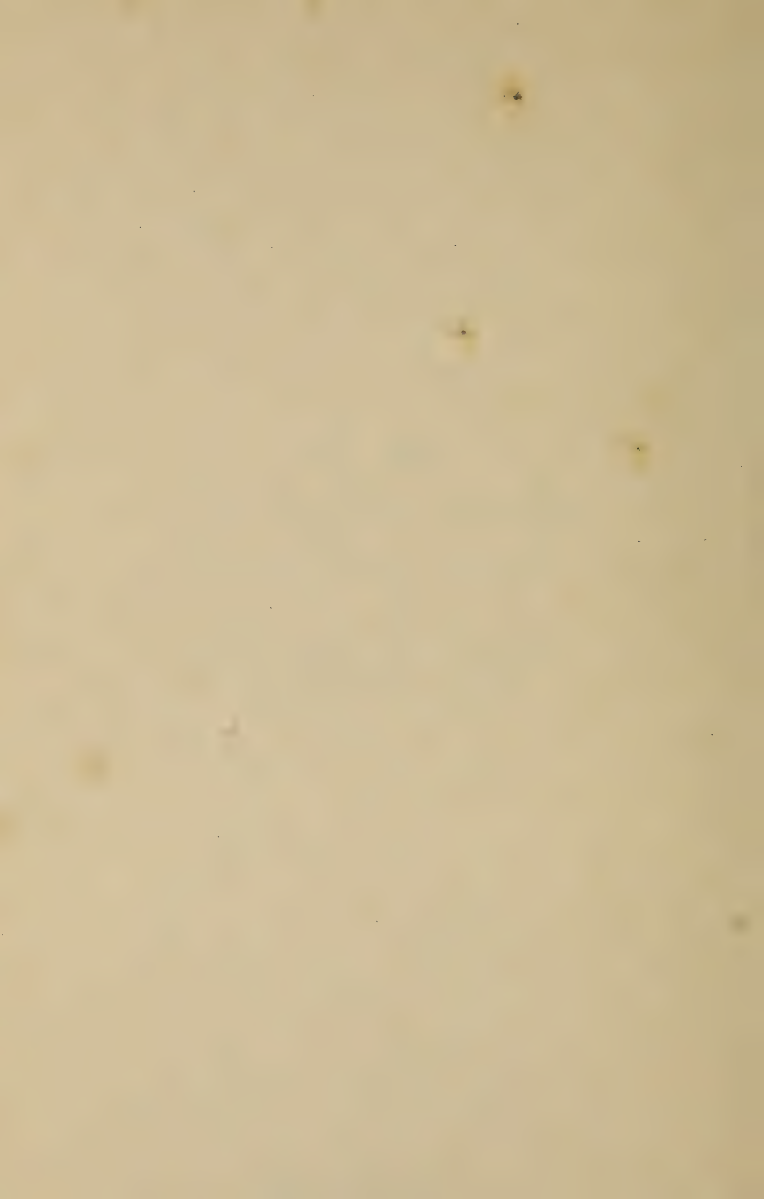
ROBERT W. WALLACE, Esq.

PRESES AND SESSION CLERK

OF

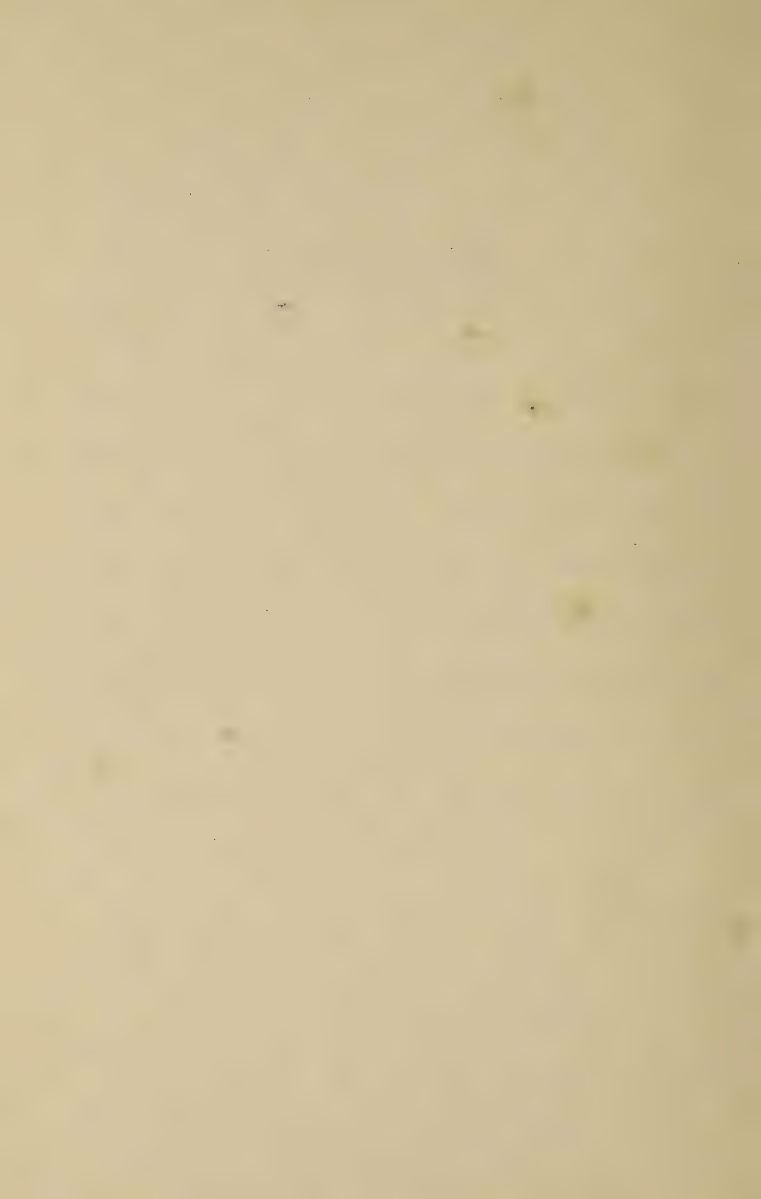
BROUGHTON PLACE UNITED FREE

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND



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## Preface



NEXT to a man's home, nothing so influences him at every point of his life as a congenial Church connection. A Christian Congregation is his spiritual home; it is here where he receives impressions and influences which shape his soul-nature, which keep him in touch with the eternal. It is more,—it is his fraternal home. The companionships and friendships which he forms within this sacred circle are a constant source of strength to him, and a stand-by throughout his whole life. Broughton Place Church has been the spiritual home and the fraternal rallying-point of many thousands. It has always been a large, united, and loyal family of Christian brethren. Anything written about this home is sure of a kindly reception.

From the detached position which the

author now occupies, pictures of the old home have risen before him out of the chambers of memory, and he has felt a call to write something which might interest Broughton Place lovers. He would like to delineate, in an imperfect way perhaps, but with intense reverence and affection, the pastors and teachers to whom spiritually he owes so much. It is true that the work and memory of both Dr Thomson and Dr Smith are receding into the background as the years advance; but it is not too late yet to try to weave the story of their lives for our gratification and edification. It is good to have "our pure minds stirred up by way of remembrance" of those "who have had the rule over us." No permanent biography of either of these great men has been penned, and hence this humble venture. It is not a full record, but it is sufficiently full to hold in permanence for us and our children the forms and the works of our revered departed leaders.

It is believed that this story of Broughton Place Congregation, grouping together the deeply interesting events of the past thirty years, while in no way official, may meet with the approval and goodwill of the members, present and past.

It traverses ground not already trodden by the excellent annual Reports of the Congregation, and this little book forms a souvenir for all who cherish a love for it. The author will feel especially grateful if it can find entrance into the homes of the aged, the solitary and the sick members of the Congregation, that their ministry of prayer may be enlisted on its behalf, and also that it may reach many former members, who, although far removed now, are not likely to forget their old spiritual home.

The frontispiece is a reduced copy of a beautiful work of art designed by Mr George S. Aitken, architect, in which the leading events and places associated with Dr Smith are grouped together in a striking fashion.

Thanks are tendered to Mr Andrew Barron, the publisher of it, for allowing this tribute to Dr Smith to be included in this work.

The work has been kindly revised by one of the members of Session, whose "Appreciation" of Dr Smith on page 57 fitly sums up the personality and career of that well-known and much-loved minister.

C. I.

*October 1914.*



# Thirty Years of Broughton Place Church



THE large and influential Congregation of Broughton Place United Free Church has now had an existence for nearly one hundred years. Its centenary is due in 1921, when no doubt the occasion will be fittingly celebrated. It is still, however, several years until that event is reached, and many changes will take place ere then. After thirty years of fellowship in the Congregation the present writer has been constrained, for family reasons, to sever his connection with it. It is a feeling of profound gratitude to God for those years of spiritual enjoyment and gracious influences, while a member, which prompts him to leave this little record behind him. We are too prone to criticise churches and ministers; but this will be a record of thankfulness to one and all for countless

blessings received in Broughton Place Church. Thirty years is a long period in the history of an individual ; it is even a long period in the history of a congregation. We will no pretend to record everything that has taken place in these thirty years. All that we can do is to give some outlines and impressions, and to mention the leading facts relating to the three ministers who have nobly served the Congregation during the period in question. It is sometimes said that our Congregation is somewhat reserved ; but the present writer has certainly not found this to be the case. He joined it in October 1883, and at once found the atmosphere congenial. Churches are pretty much what we ourselves make them. If we come to them in the right spirit, and resolve to make them our spiritual homes, we will certainly find them all that we can reasonably expect. Broughton Place Church makes no pretensions to perfection ; but it is as warm a Congregation and as worthy a spiritual home as one can look for in this mixed world.

## Brief Sketch of the Congregation

Although the purpose of the present contribution is to give an account of the principal events in the Congregation in the thirty years from 1883 to 1913, it will be appropriate first to note some earlier points about the Congregation for the benefit of the numerous members who have not made themselves acquainted with its history. In 1871 the Jubilee of the Congregation was worthily celebrated, and in the following year the official "History" was published. It is a goodly volume of 342 pages, of which 160 pages deal with the Congregation proper, and 182 pages describe the various missionary operations in connection with it. This fullness of detail gives the "History" of 1872 a uniqueness and a completeness which render it unnecessary ever again to go over the same ground. As a Congregational History or Review it is so full, so minute, and so well arranged as to entirely supersede the necessity of ever again compiling a similar book. Broughton Place Congregation originated in a large "hiving-off" of members from what used to be

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known as Rose Street Secession Church, now M'Donald Road U.F. Church. For a considerable period prior to 1821, Rose Street Congregation was very prosperous, and sittings for all the members who belonged to it could not be obtained. As it was impossible to enlarge the building, a desire sprang up to "flit" to a different part of the city. The Rev. Dr James Hall and the Rev. John Brown were then the collegiate pastors of Rose Street Congregation. A site for the new church was obtained at Broughton Place, and the new building was constructed at a cost of £7100, and opened on 27th May 1821. Dr Hall and a large body—numbering about 600 members—of the Rose Street Congregation removed, by a friendly arrangement with the Presbytery, to the new building, while Mr Brown and a minority of members continued to occupy the old building. In Broughton Place Dr Hall ministered for five years and a half, and died on 28th November 1826, greatly mourned by his Congregation, whom he had faithfully served for forty years in all. Mr (afterwards Dr) Brown was then called from Rose Street to Broughton



Place, where he was inducted on 21st May 1829. Dr Brown continued in office as sole pastor of the Congregation until the year 1842, when the Rev. Andrew Thomson, then of Lothian Road Church, was elected as his colleague and successor, and on 28th June of that year was inducted accordingly. For seventeen years Mr Thomson laboured with Dr Brown as a son in the gospel. Dr Brown's long ministry came to an end by his death on 13th October 1858, and thereafter Mr, who was now Dr, Thomson assumed the sole responsibility for the pastoral oversight of the Congregation. The membership was then about 1400.

These particulars are given in great detail in the "History," and those who desire to know more about the origin and progress of the Congregation than are here briefly recorded are referred to it or to the Memoir of Dr Brown, written by the late Principal Cairns. We will pick up the thread of the story more easily after this glance at those far-off days. Before proceeding to sketch the history of the Congregation during the latter days of Dr Andrew Thomson's long ministry, it may be

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interesting to give some particulars relating to the building for the benefit of those who have no information on the subject. The first cost of the erection and equipment of the church amounted to, as already stated, £7100. For many years a heavy debt rested upon the Congregation. When Dr Brown was inducted it amounted to £4000. Large amounts were cleared off at intervals, and in 1852 the balance was extinguished. In that year extensive alterations and improvements were also effected at a cost of £1470, and this indebtedness was paid off by 1858. Externally the church has no great appearance architecturally, although there is a certain massiveness and plain dignity about it which pleases. It is not generally known that the original design provided for the erection of a spire or tower, with provision for a public clock and possibly also of a bell. The massive pillars are reared on a foundation of unusual strength, which is strong enough to bear the weight of a spire. The erection of the latter would be a splendid adornment to the building. Internally the church is attractive and comfortable, all the

seats being covered with red cushions. The acoustic properties of the church are perfect, and it is no strain whatever to preach there. In 1870 extensive alterations were made on the interior at a cost of £2157, and in 1890 the organ was introduced, after certain structural alterations. The church was originally seated for 1560 persons. The number of sittings is now 1470, or practically one for every member.

### Rev. Dr Andrew Thomson

The "History" ends with an account of how the Congregation stood in its Jubilee year, 1872. It now remains for us to deal with the second half of Dr Thomson's long ministry. The "History" covers thirty years of it, and the present account covers twenty-nine, making his total period of service in Broughton Place Church fifty-nine years in all, besides which he spent five years in his first charge in Lothian Road Church. It is interesting to observe that Dr Thomson's ministry extended over practically the whole period of the reign of the late Queen Victoria—from 1837 to 1901, and if Her Majesty's

reign was memorable, no less memorable was the ministry of the venerable Doctor in its own sphere. It was a great thing to keep together, and in a state of health, harmony, and activity, for nigh sixty years, the largest dissenting Congregation in Scotland. No common man could have done this. Dr Thomson was certainly no common man. He was a prince among preachers, a man of affairs, and a commanding personality even in the headquarters of Scottish Presbyterianism. He was a man greatly beloved by his own Congregation, and looked up to by the denomination of which he was one of its brightest ornaments, and justly esteemed by the citizens of Edinburgh. Of massive build and benignant countenance, walking about our streets with dignified manner and stately step, his was a figure, once seen, never to be forgotten. Some who did not know him well thought him courtly and haughty, with a slight austerity about him, but to those who knew him best he was a singularly humble and kindly man, who yet never forgot that he was minister of a large and influential Christian Congregation.



Dr Thomson belonged to the old school of ministers ; yet he showed a wonderful willingness to adapt himself to the changes in church life and practices which came about as the century advanced. He was no narrow-minded ecclesiastic, but broad, tolerant, and sympathetic in his views, and that too at a period when people were crotchety over the jots and tittles of ecclesiastical life and Christian doctrine. Thus Dr Thomson uniformly supported the cause of Christian union at a time when the various denominations worked very much apart, and he lived on terms of amity with the ministers of all the reformed Churches. As a preacher and expositor he ranked high. Gifted with the command of easy and graceful language, endowed with a voice which, though not loud, was persuasive and mellifluous, he could hold his large audience interested and even spellbound to the end. Elderly people have told of his Sabbath evening lectures on special subjects, when vast crowds gathered to hear him, filling up the platform and the pulpit steps. He read his sermons, and that too at a period when reading was held in dislike, but



he was a "fell reader." The graceful English diction of his discourses and the freshness and solid worth of their matter, together with the high character of the preacher, gave Dr Thomson a commanding place among Edinburgh pulpiteers, and for long years he retained his popularity. It was Dr Thomson's habit to give courses of lectures on Sabbath forenoons, and when the present writer joined Broughton Place Church in 1883, he was lecturing through the Gospel of Luke in great detail. We have often regretted that the good old practice of lecturing has so largely ceased in our Scottish churches, as sermons on isolated texts, no matter how good they may be, are not the way to understand the Scriptures. Expounding the Bible in regular lectures or studies is the only way to make our people "mighty in the Scriptures."

Dr Thomson made two great causes particularly his own, and for each he did yeoman service. These were Foreign Missions and Sabbath Observance. It was largely due to his initiation and perseverance that his Congregation became warmly interested in and gener-

ous supporters of the foreign missionary crusade. The financial machinery by which the movement was set agoing and kept agoing was due mainly to his eloquent pleading and the zeal which he infused into others. He had a high conception of the mission of the Christian Church, and in his own person he carried out that conception. If all Christian Congregations formed their missionary organisations after the pattern of Broughton Place, it might be said quite truthfully although with becoming humility that the cause of foreign missions would make far greater progress than it actually makes. Then in reference to Sabbath observance Dr Thomson played a worthy and a notable part. In his time no doubt people's feelings were stirred in regard to this question more than they are now-a-days. We value the Sabbath quite as much as our worthy fathers did, but we have largely resigned ourselves to the inevitable, as it now seems to have been. The Sabbath is being used now for purposes and in ways which it is in vain for us to protest against. The Sunday car, for instance, has come to stay, and being pat-

ronised extensively by church people, the wrongness of it is not now so apparent as it once was. With every desire to be charitable, it does appear to us that the trend of things is to be regretted. Dr Thomson lived at a time when the Sabbath question began to stir up the country. He began his ministry in Broughton Place Church in 1842, the year when Sunday trains were first run between Edinburgh and Glasgow, which step drew from Mr M'Cheyne his famous "Letter" on Sabbath railways. The Doctor took up a strong position on the same subject, and he became widely known as a warm supporter and defender of the Sabbath. In 1861 he was present at the conference of the Evangelical Alliance at Geneva, and contributed a paper on "The Sabbath," which had a very wide circulation, and was translated into the French, German, Dutch, and Italian languages. The example and influence of Dr Thomson were of great assistance in connection with the movement for the better observance of the Sabbath. To the last of his long life he maintained his interest in this question. The present writer came into pleasant contact

with him in connection with a congregational essay which he wrote on the Sabbath in response to the Doctor's offer of a prize for the best paper on that subject, which competition was open to the young people of the Congregation. The writer was fortunate in being the successful essayist, and the Doctor's prize bears his inscription, and is valued accordingly.

Dr Thomson was not a leading ecclesiastic, and his voice was not often heard on the floor of Presbytery or Synod. He was the pastor rather than the church-statesman. Yet when he did speak, his words were listened to with respect, and his influence as a moderating force was considerable. He reached the high position of Moderator of the United Presbyterian Church in 1874.

Dr Thomson was an earnest and convinced supporter, as indeed the United Presbyterian Church as a whole was, of the projected Union of the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church all through the negotiations which began in 1863 and terminated in 1873. He was a thorough Voluntary and proud of the honourable history of his deno-



mination, yet his wide sympathies and far-seeing sagacity made him eagerly espouse the proposed Union. The suspension of the negotiations in 1873, out of deference to a section of the Free Church, was a great disappointment to him and to the United Presbyterian Church. Fortunately he lived to see the fruition of his desires and prayers in the great Union of 1900, although he was then too old and living too secluded a life to take any keen interest or any active part. Dr Thomson was ever the friend of evangelism, and he rendered great service in connection with the revival movements of 1859 and 1873, cordially welcoming Messrs Moody and Sankey to Edinburgh in the latter year. Broughton Place Church was at different times the meeting-place for these great evangelistic movements, although its somewhat out-of-the-way position renders it not the most suitable *rendezvous* for public gatherings.

Dr Thomson was a much respected "citizen of no mean city," and for many years he took a share in the work of various public boards. He worthily represented dissenting and parti-



cularly United Presbyterian interests in all questions affecting the religious life of the community. His name ever stood as the hall-mark of integrity, efficiency, and broad-mindedness. As an author he was prolific in the first half of his long ministry, but his works were biographical and practical rather than theological.

When the present writer joined the fellowship of the Congregation in 1883, Dr Thomson was still in the full vigour of his ministerial usefulness, and, along with an assistant, he discharged efficiently the onerous duties of the large Congregation. He had indeed been feeling that the burden was becoming too great, and had just taken the first steps for being relieved. He informed the Session and the Congregation of his desire to have a colleague and successor, and, after the usual steps, the Presbytery gave power to the Congregation to elect such. The thoughts of the people turned to the Rev. John Smith, M.A., of Wallace Green Church, Berwick-on-Tweed, as the one whom they desired to be their junior pastor. Mr Smith, although then a minister of the English Presbyterian

Church, had formerly belonged to the United Presbyterian Church, and was well known ; besides which he had the strong recommendation of the well-beloved Principal Cairns, who was Mr Smith's predecessor in Wallace Green Church, and a very distinguished member of Broughton Place Congregation. A hearty call was addressed in 1883 to Mr Smith, who, however, did not see his way then to accept it. Dr Thomson, undaunted, continued to discharge full ministerial duty for a further period. The thoughts of the Congregation were still centred on Mr Smith as the one most suitable in all respects as collegiate minister, and again, early in the year 1885, they addressed a second call to him. Mr Smith now recognised the double call as the leading of Providence, and this time he saw his way clearly to accept the invitation. Great was the rejoicing of the venerable pastor and his attached Congregation at the fulfilment of their hopes and prayers. In due time Mr Smith was inducted as junior pastor.

We defer to a following section some biographical details regarding Mr Smith, and

continue in this section the leading events in the joint-pastorate. The union thus formed proved to be a most auspicious one. What has been stated regarding the joint-pastorate of Dr Brown and Dr Thomson applied with equal truthfulness to the new union of pastors. Such dual pastorates are sometimes difficult to carry on, and not seldom friction arises, but happily it was not so here. Each minister understood the position and the point of view of the other. The venerable Doctor admired the eloquence and the talents of his younger colleague ; while Mr Smith cherished feelings of fatherly affection and loyalty towards Dr Thomson, and served him as a son in the Gospel. The joint-pastorate worked well during the long period of sixteen years, and the Congregation continued to prosper and to remain in unbroken, almost, one might say, in marvellous harmony. Indeed the notable harmony and good feeling which have prevailed in Broughton Place Church during the whole of its long history have been quite striking, and much of this is undoubtedly due to the tact and Christian good feeling of those who have been respon-

sible for managing its affairs. The two ministers were ever men of peace, but the same must be said concerning the splendid bodyguard of elders, managers, and workers of all kinds by whom they were supported. Never was a Congregation better served by its spiritual and temporal overseers. They were almost to a man noted for their administrative abilities as well as their Christian graces, and were most ably assisted by many talented and devoted women, including Mrs Thomson, the wife of the senior minister. For this happy state of affairs the Congregation had and still has the greatest reason to thank God.

From 1885 onwards the Congregation entered into even greater prosperity and usefulness, for the name and eloquence of Mr Smith were bound to attract large numbers of new members. The number of agencies at work became even larger than before, and the splendid and commodious "Church Buildings," which had been erected a few years previously, were fully occupied almost every evening by classes and meetings of all kinds. The two pastors took the Sabbath



services in rotation. The Congregation fed on the "finest of the wheat." Now they enjoyed the quiet, dignified, and scholarly lectures of Dr Thomson; now they revelled in the clear evangelistic oratory of Mr Smith, who, in 1893, had the degree of Doctor of Divinity conferred upon him by the University of Aberdeen, and to whom we will afterwards allude as Dr Smith. There are probably few Congregations in Britain—perhaps we might go farther afield—where there has been a succession of four ministers, each possessing the degree of D.D. Nor is it likely that the honours should stop short with Dr Smith!

An event of great interest was reached in the year 1887—the Jubilee of Dr Thomson. The same year will also ever be memorable as the Jubilee year of Queen Victoria. The occasion was celebrated in a befitting way, and it attracted much interest both in the Congregation and in Edinburgh. Special services were held on the Sabbath, a large *dejeuner* was given to selected friends in the Church Hall; and in the Synod Hall there was held an immense public meeting, over which



Dr Smith presided, and at which a great many congratulatory addresses and other more substantial gifts were presented to Dr Thomson.

On the death of Principal Cairns in 1892, a desire sprang up in various quarters of the United Presbyterian Church to appoint Dr Thomson to the vacant position, on the understanding that it would not involve the usual professorial duty of teaching in the Theological Hall of the denomination nor his severance from the pastorate. Many felt that the honour was one of which the venerable Doctor was worthy, and that he would have filled the post with dignity. Another strong name was, however, proposed against his—that of the late Dr George C. Hutton, the then leader to all intents and purposes of the denomination, and although Dr Thomson's name was proposed in the Synod by Mr Thomas Shaw, Advocate (now Lord Shaw), with persuasive eloquence, the majority of the members voted for Dr Hutton. Probably it was just as well, as Dr Thomson was far too advanced in life to discharge even the light duties of Principal efficiently, and the interests of the denomination seemed to

call for a younger and stronger personality, such as Dr Hutton undeniably was.

The remaining years of Dr Thomson's ministry went past comparatively uneventfully. He was able to share with Dr Smith the duties of the pulpit, the two pastors preaching alternately with wonderful regularity. The aged pastor, however, began to decline in his former mental vigour, and his state of health was such that although he was privileged actually to see the sixtieth or "Diamond Jubilee" of his ministry, it was thought inadvisable and unnecessary to have any public celebration of what in other circumstances would have been a unique event. This event took place in the same year as Queen Victoria's memorable Diamond Jubilee, 1897, and in 1898 Dr Thomson made his last appearance in the pulpit, formally resigned his position as Senior Minister, and immediately withdrew into private life. From his home at 63 Northumberland Street he never emerged again to do any pastoral or public work, his spirits having been much shattered in consequence of the death of his brilliant son, Sheriff Comrie Thomson. At length

the aforetime physical and mental vigour of Dr Thomson completely gave way, and somewhat unexpectedly at the last the call came to him for higher service. He died on 8th February 1901, just a few days after Queen Victoria the Good, whose life and reign had run concurrently with his. The public mind in general, and that of Broughton Place Congregation in particular, were deeply moved by the double event, and in a manner it seemed as if the foundations of the earth had given way. A solemn funeral service was held in the Church, which was largely attended by members of the Congregation and the general public, and from thence a long procession moved behind the funeral cortege to the Dean Cemetery, where all that was mortal of Dr Andrew Thomson—pastor, preacher, and writer—was laid to rest. The general verdict concerning him was that his life had been nobly spent, with honour and dignity, and that one of the best, safest, and most consistent men and ministers whom Scotland had ever produced had passed away.

### Rev. Dr John Smith

We have already stated that Dr Smith, then Mr Smith, "of Berwick," was inducted as colleague to Dr Thomson in March 1885. He was introduced by the late Rev. Dr Oswald Dykes, of the English Presbyterian Church, and his first sermon was preached on the words, "Shew me Thy glory." We will now speak of some of the principal Congregational events associated with Dr Smith during his twenty years' ministry among us. After his lamented death on 13th December 1905, a desire sprang up in many quarters to have some biography published of him, but this was never accomplished. Many beautiful tributes of respect were spoken and written at the time, but these were all of an ephemeral nature, and now practically nothing remains easily accessible to remind us of our beloved minister, although of course he can never be forgotten. For this reason the present writer is gratified to have this opportunity of grouping together in more permanent form some of the main facts of his life, and of attempting,



however imperfectly, to delineate his character, for the benefit of the many, both in and out of the Congregation, to whom Dr Smith is yet a *clare et venerabile nomen*. The following succinct account of his life is taken from the *Missionary Record*, and it cannot be improved upon :—

“John Smith was born at Forres on 19th May 1844. His father, a respected merchant, died at a slightly earlier age than his son, of the same malady ; an only sister died shortly after ; but his mother, a gracious woman of strong sagacity and homely sweetness, was happily spared to dwell with her son until three years ago. It was beautiful to observe the maternal pride and the filial devotion which made their companionship a daily joy to each.

“John Smith grew up under the ministry of the Rev. William Watson, minister of Castlehill Church, for whom all his life long he cherished a reverent and trustful affection. From the Grammar School at Forres he passed to the University of Aberdeen, his face set towards the ministry ; but not till after his second session did he awaken to the



scholarly aspirations which gained him distinction during the rest of his curriculum. His entrance into the United Presbyterian Hall coincided with Dr Cairns's entrance on his professorship there ; it was the first meeting of two men who were to be afterwards closely linked. The Hall met then in Queen Street for only two months in autumn, and the northern student, acquainted with few, kept modestly in the background. He passed too through a time of deep heart-searching and intellectual dubiety, but emerged from it with a new assurance of the truth of the Word of God, and of his own call to the ministry.

“Before he left the promise of the man had been discovered ; and his very first discourse before the Presbytery of Elgin and Inverness made an impression which led the members afterwards in private freely to prophesy for him a career of eminence in the Church. During the last two vacations of his theological curriculum he took charge of a station at Fraserburgh, where the young and struggling congregation prospered greatly under his ministry.

“In 1872 he took license, and in the

following year he was called to the vacant congregation of Burghead, near to his native town. So many gathered to his ordination there that the church could not hold them, and an adjournment was made to the large Free Church building. To some in the congregation it was a natural grief that their new minister was not ordained in their own church, but by the greater part it was regarded as a hospitable omen of future union. Even on the difficult soil of Burghead the new ministry soon made the little church the centre of a warm and widespread interest. The memory of it lingers to this day.

“ But the main fact in the time at Burghead was the spiritual uplift which came to the minister himself. In the solitude of the manse he got a new vision of the Lord Jesus as his Saviour, and of the greatness and responsibility of work in His service. To this vision he was not disobedient, and it may be that here was the genesis of his own saying that “time’s best gift to man was a resolved heart and a surrendered will.” In that profound experience his life was tuned to a higher key. Strange it may seem that shortly thereafter

to a surprised Presbytery he suddenly demitted his charge at Burghead on the simple ground that the field was not one where he could longer work. But when he fully stated his reasons for this action, he left the Presbytery and even the disappointed congregation acquiescent in a decision obviously inspired by loyalty to profoundest spiritual conviction.

“By this time the little flock at Fraserburgh, some forty strong, had built themselves a church, and forthwith they called him to the pastorate there. He was inducted in October 1875. It was familiar ground to him, and he gave himself to the work with gladness. Within two years the congregation had multiplied fourfold, and crowds gathered to his evening services. When at length a call came to him which he felt he must accept some prophesied that with his departure the cause would sink again. But he had built too well for that ; it has steadily held forward.

“With his entrance in 1878, on the charge of Wallace Green Church at Berwick, in succession to Principal Cairns, Dr Smith may be said to have stepped also into the

public life of the Church. From that day he was ever more widely recognized as one of the great gifts of God to His Church, a man of magnetic charm and generous sympathies, withal a man of original vision and of fervid power, aglow with zeal for every good cause, and of entire devotion, who spent himself freely to forward the work of the Lord, and yet so held his course as at the same time to lift all around him to larger thoughts and purer life."

After his induction over Broughton Place Congregation, Dr Smith entered wholeheartedly into its work, and spared himself in no way. First, he was, as already stated, loyal and devoted as a son to his venerable colleague, entering most heartily into the duties of collegiate pastor, a position which sometimes is fraught with vexations and misunderstandings. His attachment to Dr Thomson was sincere—we all saw that, and he contrived to make things as easy and smooth as possible. Sabbath after Sabbath the Congregation were ministered to by a dual ministry of the first order. Dr Thomson's discourses, calmly delivered,



shewed much research, and were couched in the most graceful English ; and his forenoon lectures on some great passage or Book of Scripture were satisfying spiritual food ; while Dr Smith's sermons, massive, and richly Biblical, but often involved in long Latinized sentences, were hammered out at white heat and delivered at a rate and with a vigour which startled and yet delighted the intelligent hearer. Dr Thomson had a grand physique—he was a veritable Saul among his people, whereas Dr Smith was short in stature, but with broad shoulders and a full chest and a finely-shaped and leonine head which indicated brain power and force of character. In preaching his frame and arms were in constant movement, emphasising his thought, his vivid face flashing every emotion and his gleaming eye pointing every appeal. The two men were a contrast not only physically but in other ways, and each was the complement of the other. These were great days in the history of the Congregation, the very memory of which is blessed.

In the earlier years of his Broughton Place ministry Dr Smith lectured through various



books and sections of the Bible, such as Genesis and Exodus, and his lectures on the latter book were afterwards published under the title of *The Permanent Message of the Exodus*. These were great expositions, and never were less than forty minutes in being delivered. Dr Smith was often brimful of his subject, and left no time for the usual closing praise or prayer at the termination of his discourse. We remember how he would then suddenly close the Bible abruptly and say, "Receive the benediction," the great congregation then breaking up and dispersing with the notes of his magnificent eloquence sounding in their ears. His sermons were characterised by the intense earnestness of a man who believed with all his heart and soul what he was saying, and who realised his accountability to God for his presentation of his message. Another great series of lectures was on the *Resurrection*, I. Cor. xv., which showed immense erudition and imagination. It was when traversing such difficult ground that one realised the originality and spiritual power of Dr Smith. Follow him we could not always, but admire

his intense earnestness, his greatness of mind, and his absolute transparency of character,—that we always could do. His preaching was sometimes intricate and cloudy, but we never ceased to admire if we could not always understand it. We felt thrilled, stimulated, and encouraged, if we did not always feel enlightened. But of course he could and often did speak simply. His second great book bore the title of *Christian Character as a Social Power*.

In the year 1901, Dr Smith felt drawn to repel the attacks of “Higher Criticism,” and he accordingly gave monthly lectures on *The Integrity of Scripture: Plain Reasons for Rejecting the Critical Hypothesis*. These lectures were afterwards published in book-form, and attracted much attention, Dr Smith being now regarded as a tower of strength among the supporters of the traditional views of the Scriptures. It was about this time also that he made a stir in the General Assembly by his attack upon the positions of his great namesake, Professor George Adam Smith, whose views were causing anxiety in the Church; but Dr John Smith’s motion mildly censuring the Professor

was outvoted by that of his brilliant friend, Principal Rainy. Dr Smith's last book was entitled *The Magnetism of Christ*, being his lectures as Lecturer on Evangelistic Theology to the students of the three colleges of the United Free Church. It was generally believed that, had he been spared, he would have reached a professoriate in one or other of the colleges. Dr Smith, however, was more of the preacher than the teacher, and he revelled in being in the front rank as a pleader for social reforms, and as an advocate of fervid evangelism. It is doubtful whether a professor's chair would not have been too limited and cribbed a position for him. Dr Smith's best energies were of necessity spent in looking after his large and attached Congregation, which year by year increased, if possible, in their admiration of and loyalty towards him. "Dr Smith of Broughton Place," became a household word, not only in Edinburgh, but in Scotland, and the membership kept up at a high and steady level of nearly 1500 members. The membership reached its highest figure, we understand, in 1903, largely as the result of so many young people joining. A spiritual

awakening took place in Edinburgh in that year, Dr Smith and many of his people sharing in it. To the Church there gravitated a constant inflow of new life from all parts, and vacant sittings were few. His evident Christian zeal and spiritual power attracted the good and the intellectual of all ranks and classes. By his own people he was perhaps seen at his best at the Wednesday night service or prayer meeting, where, laying aside the restraint of his "paper," he delivered extempore addresses instinct with devotional feeling. His prayers on these occasions were like the face-to-face talk of a child with his parent. He seemed to bring his people into the very presence of God. The prayer meeting was, during the whole course of his Broughton Place ministry, usually well-attended, and with such a meeting bracing up and spiritualising the members, it was not to be wondered at that the numerous Christian agencies of the Congregation were all active and fruitful. The prayer meeting is everywhere a real test of the spiritual state and prosperity of a Church. Dr Smith was right-royally supported in all his labours by a



devoted body of elders, officials, and workers of all kinds, among whom there reigned the spirit of peace and harmony, and who bore their pastor in their prayers to God. The perennial good-feeling which has prevailed in Broughton Place Congregation has been truly wonderful; and the explanation is in part due to the brotherliness, the Christian forbearance, and the shining example and influence of the pastors.

During his pastorate in Broughton Place, Dr Smith received at least two calls, both to positions of responsibility and influence in Glasgow and London respectively, but both he refused, to the relief of the Congregation.

Dr Smith was a great traveller, and at various times he visited the Continent of Europe, Egypt, Palestine, and the American States. Such travelling was bound to enlarge his views of life, and especially religious life, and it kept him from narrowness and uncharity, while it did not lessen his love for Scotland and his own denomination. His Congregation reaped the benefit of his travels, and were treated to many a word-painting of the lands he had seen. Perhaps the Church



was never so crowded as it was one week-evening in the autumn of 1891, when he lectured on his visit to America, where he had, among other things, been speaking to Mr D. L. Moody's students at Northfield. To Mr Moody he presented a largely-signed address from ministers and others requesting him to visit Scotland, which he subsequently did. Mr Moody was a great admirer and friend of Dr Smith, finding in him a splendid instance of intellectual ability coupled with evangelistic zeal.

It was on his return from Egypt in 1893 that the tidings reached Dr Smith of the degree of D.D. conferred by his *Alma Mater*. It came to him like a welcome to renewed labour. In 1898 Dr Smith reached his semi-jubilee as a minister, and the happy though not uncommon event was celebrated in a worthy manner, by his receiving a substantial gift for the purpose of enabling him to visit the Holy Land, in the same way as Dr Thomson had done on the occasion of his semi-jubilee.

A minister of Dr Smith's outstanding ability was certain to be early selected for

various offices in, first of all, the Presbyterian Church of England, next, the United Presbyterian Church, and, lastly, the United Free Church. He early espoused the cause of Union between the Free and the United Presbyterian Churches, and his perfervid pleading largely helped to bring it to a head in 1900. Broughton Place Congregation was one of the first to pass, by a congregational vote, a unanimous resolution approving of the projected Union. His wide sympathies made union appear to him scriptural, natural, and easy, and so when the great Union was actually accomplished in 1900, Dr Smith rejoiced exceedingly. The unexpected and admittedly inequitable decision of the House of Lords in the Free Church case in 1904 reached his ears while he was abroad, and it greatly depressed him. He was indeed heard to say "all is lost," but the mood passed away, and although the effects of the decision were distressing and far-reaching, his faith rallied, and he saw the finger of God in it all, although he did not live long enough to see order evolved out of chaos, and peace restored to his sadly-harassed Church.

Another cause which Dr Smith made his own was the Temperance cause, and many a rousing speech did he make in pulpit and on platform on its behalf. He was a frequent and welcome speaker at Carrubber's Close Mission, of which he was a director. He looked forward with eager anticipation to the time when Scotland would have a Local Veto measure of its own, and his heart would have rejoiced had he been spared to the present year, when he would have seen the fruition of his hopes. The broad, evangelical, yet sane platform of the Young Men's Christian Association was also the scene of some of his most eloquent and stirring addresses and appeals. He was all life, animation, and vigour there, and by the leaders of the Y.M.C.A. he was held in passionate esteem.

In the later years of his life Dr Smith was greatly interested in the Keswick Convention. The number of members of Broughton Place Congregation who have found their way to this remarkable gathering is surprisingly small; hence a few sentences regarding this scene of their former pastor's visits and labours may prove specially acceptable.

Keswick town is situated amid the magnificent beauties of the English Lake District, which recalls vividly the scenery of Loch Lomond or Loch Katrine, although possessing a softness and a verdure not found usually in our own Highland districts. But splendid as are its scenic attractions, and fascinating as are its poetical associations, Keswick is specially known as being the *rendezvous* of the most remarkable religious gathering, we dare to say, in Christendom. Here are gathered together yearly in July a great crowd of about 6000 of the very cream of British Christians, drawn from all denominations, the Church of England perhaps preponderating, for purposes of Bible study, prayer, and consecration. It is a great and impressive assemblage, which often fills to overflowing the two spacious marquees, at whose entrance is exhibited the motto, "All one in Christ Jesus." To visit Keswick Convention is a red-letter experience in one's Christian life, and few can go there without undergoing a spiritual revolution. The atmosphere is highly charged with spiritual electricity, and the presence of God is felt with an intensity



and a vividness that is perfectly surprising. Into this favoured atmosphere Dr Smith was introduced, apparently through his friendship with the late Rev. W. D. Moffat, whose own ministry had been enriched by his experiences at the Convention. He speedily was selected as one of the recognised speakers, a great honour, as those who know all about the Convention can understand. Dr Smith was a *persona grata* at the Convention meetings, partly because he was one of the first Scotsmen who ever spoke there, but chiefly because of his impassioned pleading on behalf of the fuller life of consecration, faith, and surrender to God, for which Keswick stands. His addresses tingled with life and eloquence of the first order; they were robust, virile, and full of unction; and his clear voice easily filled the great tent, full to overflowing with an eager crowd of spiritual enthusiasts and seekers after God. To one of Dr Smith's gifts and spirituality, to speak to such an audience would bring out the very best that was in him. There was that bond of sympathy and communion between him and his hearers which operated to vivify and



intensify his message; and in the extempore style of address he got away from all stiffness. Many a soul received stimulus and new light from Dr Smith's addresses, and many an Englishman must have envied the Scottish congregation which had such a striking personality as their teacher. Keswick spread the name and fame of Dr Smith far and near, and thousands who never saw his face nor heard his voice read his addresses in the *Life of Faith*, that most uplifting of religious journals. The blessing that he personally received at Keswick made itself apparent in many ways and along various lines. It largely explained his very catholic spirit, his earnest endeavours to promote the cause of Union, his evangelistic efforts both inside and outside his Congregation, and, not least, his own personal daily walk with God. We might also add, it made him the humble, the approachable, and the self-effacing man his friends ever found him to be. The fruits of the Spirit, received by all who worthily attend Keswick, were abundantly manifested in the life and testimony of Dr John Smith increasingly as his life moved onwards to its close.

Dr Smith, although not strictly an ecclesiastic so-called, took his full share in the work of the Church Courts. He did a great deal there in the advocacy of Foreign Missions and Temperance; and, as already stated, he earnestly and consistently pled on behalf of Union with the Free Church. When the negotiations were in progress he was one of those deputed to speak on the floor of the Free Church Assembly on this great subject, and his reception in that House was most enthusiastic. He was indeed as great a favourite in the Free Church as in his own; but the fact was that he belonged to all Churches and all Christians. No one can doubt that, had he been spared, he would have reached the high honour of Moderator, or been chosen for a Professor's chair. But that was not to be.

During the twenty years of his Broughton Place ministry the work of the Congregation went on healthily and successfully in all its departments. Were this a detailed history of the Congregation, a great deal would have to be chronicled of deepest interest regarding the

varied agencies of the Congregation and its work in the Canongate and in heathen lands. It is really a marvellous story. But this is not a full, and still less an official account, and that is all that we propose to say on the matter. Dr Smith was the mainspring and the mainstay of all this great and varied enterprise, and his large body of co-adjutors supported him in every scheme most nobly and whole-heartedly. But we might recall that one enterprise which absorbed much of Dr Smith's thoughts in the closing years of his life was the need of open-air services to reach the non-churchgoing classes. Largely through his efforts, the Presbytery framed a scheme by which two or three Congregations were grouped together in carrying on such work, and in this way the field allocated to Broughton Place Church was the Calton Hill, and here such services were for a time held.

And now we come to the saddest, most trying period in the history of the Congregation,—the illness and death of their beloved pastor. He had been fully occupied down to December 1905, and was apparently in the

enjoyment of perfect health. No one looked for the tragic events which were at hand. On the forenoon of Sabbath, 3rd December, he preached in St George's United Free Church—the Cathedral of Scottish Presbyterianism—on the text, “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith,” and as he left the building he was seized with a paralytic shock. Tenderly he was taken home; but he feared that it was the beginning of the end, and so it proved. Then followed ten anxious days of suffering of body and exhaustion of mind; while the Congregation and the whole Christian community of Edinburgh followed with breathless suspense the course of his illness. His particular friends and chosen comrades were in an agony of suspense. The worst was feared, and the worst happened. His brave, loyal, and beautiful life had run its course while he was yet apparently in the full tide of his strength and usefulness. He passed away on 13th December, deeply mourned not only by his attached people, but by a great multitude of admirers in the city where he had laboured so long, and by thousands outside. Then followed the sad



days of mourning and the funeral ceremonies. On the Sabbath after his death a devotional service was held in the Church, which was conducted by Professor MacEwen and Dr John Young, who were both members of the Congregation, and who have done such splendid and willing service for it times without number. Next day, Monday, a solemn funeral service was held in the Church, which was crowded. The coffin, covered with wreaths, lay on the table on the platform; and the elders who sat beside it passed through a trying experience. At the conclusion of the service a long funeral procession, made up of the Congregation, members of Presbytery, public bodies, and the citizens generally, slowly walked to the Waverley Station, from whence the train carried the loved remains to Forres, his native town, in the lovely cemetery of which they were reverently consigned to rest. Dr Smith was rather more than sixty-one years when he died; one is tempted to say that he died prematurely of exhaustion through the pressure and strain of his too-manifold labours.



## An Appreciation of Dr Smith.

By one of his Elders.

(*From the "British Weekly."*)

"There are giants in the earth in these days"—giants in stature, and giants in the various occupations or lines of life. Dr John Smith of Edinburgh was not to be reckoned in the first-named class, for, like Zaccheus and many another notable, he was 'little of stature.' With Dr Smith, however, the proverb that 'good gear goes into little bulk' was amply verified, and in calm and critical Edinburgh he undoubtedly won for himself a foremost place as a giant in the pulpit. Witness the man as he ascended the rostrum of a Sabbath forenoon. The set purpose in the whole facial expression could be noted, betokening that he had risen from no ordinary wrestling with God, and came with a message which no man or devil might hinder him from pouring forth. Like the Bruce at Bannockburn he had risen from his knees with the intention and power to slay his thousands.

“The vast assemblage, who were soon to ‘hang upon his lips,’ at once caught an inspiration akin to his as he proceeded with the opening services. And what prayers! Just as it was appropriately and reverently said of Chalmers that in his prayers he took you ‘far ben’ to God, so Dr Smith took you into the inner sanctuary, the very holy of holies. Anon he laid bare all sin, and then with Moody-like pathos appealed to the covenant mercies of the Father through the tender sacrificial love of the Son, until there would be a lump in the throat of the most casual worshipper. One cannot describe prayers of the kind referred to. They must be experienced; and it is only a man possessing the special gift who could maintain in public such a soul-stirring yet simple converse with the Almighty.

“In his preaching the secret of Dr Smith’s power was the well-chosen subject, the clever marshalling of fact, argument, and illustration, great dramatic power both in the raising and lowering of the strong voice, and in the untiring but appropriate gesture,—all these coupled with an overpowering earnestness,

sincerity, and consecrated effort. Science, art, poetry, and incident were freely used in illustration, and in truth were often needed as pegs whereon to hang the points to be remembered in the midst of a surging torrent of clinching argument or fiery declamation.

“There was withal a thorough freshness and breeziness about Dr Smith’s preaching, and there was no waiting to the end of the discourse to point the moral, but the telling application was carried right through. Here is a specimen more of method than of eloquence, culled from the writer’s note book (perhaps not verbatim, but it will serve the purpose):—‘The Israelites did not thank God for their deliverance from their enemies, but continued their mournings. Thus some are always ready to murmur at their trials and keep old sores perpetually before their minds, forgetting to be thankful for present mercies. We take our mercies as matters of course, and never forget to murmur at our trials. Is this not because our interests are centered in the desert of this world, and not in the refreshing streams and Elims of God’s truth,—encanopied

by God as the Israelites were encanopied by the fronds of the grateful palms of Elim ?'

"It is not often that a successful preacher is so effective in addressing young people as Dr Smith was. He devoted ten minutes before his forenoon sermon to an ideal address to the young, which was always a great treat to the older as well as the younger folks present. Few people could tell a story so aptly, neatly, and correctly, or send it home with more telling force; but perhaps he excelled even more in making excellent use of passing or commonplace incidents. One almost felt a whiff of Highland air as he told the young folks how he has just returned from 'a lovely prospect of Highland moor and hill, of illimitable extent, covered with heather, and shimmering in a thousand hues of light and shade. Take one sprig of that heather in your hand, and how small its threadlike stem and flower. But pluck off one tiny bloom and see how small it is. Yet that illimitable stretch of hill and dale is made up of millions of such tiny blooms. So our individual lives, if moulded and fashioned on

God's lines, go to make up the great temple of redeemed humanity.'

"Dr Smith was a great reader and evidently laid a wide range of authors under contribution. His study was walled up with books two and three deep in the shelves, and as he told his young men in an address on 'The Study of Books,' his practice was to read, pencil in hand, and note points on the margin for future reference. Far travelled, too, was the Doctor, for he had done a good bit of Europe, Egypt, and America. Mr Moody's revival work here and in Northfield and Chicago had Dr Smith's warm sympathy, and he has given a course of lectures in the Institute founded by the great American evangelist.

"Perhaps one of the best tests of Dr Smith's earnest work was the largely-attended weekly prayer meeting which he conducted with so much acceptance on Wednesday evenings. Many agreed that here he was at his best.

"The temperance cause and the purity crusade ever found in Dr Smith a redoubtable champion, with whom there was no mincing



of matters, and whose denunciations of evil fell fast and fearless as thunderbolts.

“The Queen of the South said to Solomon ‘Happy are thy men, happy are thy servants, which stand continually before thee,’ and it may be said that happy were the elders and all other co-workers with Dr Smith in Broughton Place Church and its various societies and missions. The glowing freshness of the numerous periodical addresses which he delivered, all beaming with rich spiritual truth, showed that he knew the secret pathway which led to the King’s garden, where he was welcome to glean among the roses of Sharon and the lilies of the valley.

“Elsewhere you will chronicle his sudden call, which came as a bolt from the blue. His last words may be said to be the text of his sermon in St George’s United Free Church, at the close of which he was smitten: ‘This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.’ He may thus be said to have died in action, realising in a striking manner the wish he expressed to an aged member of his Congregation.

“ God laid His hand upon him,  
For his part on earth was done ;  
And He took him to the city bright,  
That knows no setting sun.  
The shade of time shall nevermore  
Be seen upon his brow,  
For the former things are passed away,  
'Tis endless glory now.”



## THE VACANCY.

The Congregation was now for the first time in its long history without a pastor; the pulpit for the first time became vacant. Such an interregnum is very often hurtful to a Congregation; few Congregations can pass through a prolonged vacancy without a diminution of their strength or some cessation of their enterprises. We record with gratitude to God that Broughton Place Congregation passed through this testing time without a breach in its harmony and without any serious hurt, either spiritually or materially. The Congregation was admirably handled, guided, and consulted; many wise heads were looking after it, and many loving hearts praying for it. Splendid service was done by the brilliant assistant minister then in charge, the Rev. Robert J. Wright, who did the bulk of the pastoral and much of the pulpit work; while Dr John Young and Professor MacEwen were ever ready to step into the breach. After the usual procedure, the Congregation were ready to address a hearty call to the Rev.

D. S. Cairns, then of Ayton, now one of the Professors in the United Free Church College at Aberdeen ; but he did not see his way to accept it. Undismayed, the Congregation continued in the path of duty, sounding first one and then another likely pastor, until the way cleared up for addressing a harmonious call to the Rev. James M. Black, of Castlehill Church, Forres (the Congregation of Dr Smith's boyhood), and, the call being accepted, he was, on 5th June 1907, solemnly inducted as minister, to the great joy of the Congregation and the community. The vacancy had lasted for eighteen months, and, while it tested, it also benefitted the Congregation.

### REV. JAMES M. BLACK.

It would not be becoming that any lengthened reference should be made to Mr Black, or his position as a minister. Praise may be pardoned when speaking of the dead (although no overpraise of Dr Smith has been made); but when speaking of the living

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praise should be restrained. Nevertheless this little history will certainly lack in completeness if the character and work of the present minister are passed by in silence. Mr Black, although minister of a small country charge, was known as a coming man in the denomination. The high opinions and hopes entertained regarding Mr Black at the time of his call and induction have not been belied. By the force of his original and eloquent preaching, and by the strength and beauty of his character, he has maintained the traditions of Broughton Place pulpit, and kept together in a state of prosperity a large, united, and influential Congregation.

It was not to be wondered at that crowds of expectant hearers eagerly pressed into the portals of Broughton Place Church on the evening of the first Sabbath when Mr Black preached as pastor on the words, "Lovest thou Me?" The Church was packed on that June evening; and for many a Sabbath thereafter the evening service continued to be run upon by the sermon-tasters and the youth of Edinburgh, whom Mr Black's fresh preaching attracted and stimulated. The flood-tide



was bound to recede a little, and the crowds of outsiders fell away, but the ever-popular evening service remained, and still remains while Mr Black is the preacher, a good and gladsome sight.

As a preacher Mr Black possesses a strong imagination, freshness of interpretation, dramatic power, and much knowledge of human nature. Many of his texts are unusual, and apparently incapable of being clothed with life and usefulness; but in his dexterous hands they are made wondrously alive with lessons ethical and spiritual. Over and over again have we marvelled at the strange texts and their original interpretation by this master of the preacher's art. Mr Black knows particularly how to preach to the burdened, the crushed, and the disconsolate sons of humanity; many of his sermons showing how well he knows and how deeply he sympathises with the sorrowful and the discouraged, of whom there are plenty in Broughton Place Church as in all churches. He knows that he has a double Gospel to preach,—a Gospel for the sinner and a Gospel for the broken-hearted. A true Christian

minister has a message not only for the soul and about the future life, but for our present needs in this world as well. The pastor of Broughton Place Church takes a broad and sympathetic view of life, and finds in the Divine Gospel a sufficient cure for life's troubles, as well as a golden key for the next world.

Mr Black, like his eminent predecessor, has a gift for addressing children, and the aptness and occasional pawkiness of his stories and illustrations drive home the truth and point the moral, not only to the little folks, but to their seniors as well. About two years ago he gave a lengthened series of addresses on *The Pilgrim Ship*, in which, like Bunyan, he drew largely on his sanctified imagination and imitated his great master. These addresses were published under the same title, and the volume constitutes Mr Black's first serious adventure into literature.

The audiences which Mr Black addresses on Sundays are large and thoughtful, perhaps even critical, a large percentage of his hearers being of the professional and educated classes ; and to satisfy them, as well as to teach and

guide them into the way of life, demands talents and abilities of no mean order. But in this great work he has succeeded well, and he is recognised as one of Edinburgh's best and most original preachers. In all the departments of congregational work there also has been seen during Mr Black's ministry of nearly seven years now, the same zeal, ability, and success as have always characterised it. And, thank God, despite the sad falling off in church attendance which is lamented on many sides, there does not appear any likelihood that Broughton Place will suffer any decline, so long at least as it has ministers of Mr Black's calibre, and so long as its atmosphere continues to be spiritual.

## CONGREGATIONAL ASSISTANTS

During the thirty years' period reviewed in this little book, there have been a number of able assistant ministers who have left their mark in greater or lesser degree on the Congregation. These included (in Dr Thomson's time) the Revs. David Smith, James Stark, A. P. Davidson and C. M. Macleroy; (in Dr Smith's time) the Revs. T. Ratcliffe Barnett (who has achieved success as a litterateur), J. Robertson Lindsay, A. Alexander, Robert Whyte, and Robert J. Wright; and (in Mr Black's time) the Revs. J. Marshall Robertson, Robert Inglis, John Baillie, and James Jardine, with several others who served for brief periods. The work of these assistants has been very valuable in every case, and has helped to consolidate the Congregation. Reference has already been made to the strenuous work done by Mr Wright at and after the death of Dr Smith. Mr Wright's services as a preacher and pastor were of a very high order, and he greatly endeared himself to every one. At the conclusion of his period of service, he was made the recipient of valuable gifts from the Congregation.

## CHURCH WORKERS

There is a temptation to speak now at some length regarding some of the principal workers in the service of the Congregation during these thirty years. It would be an interesting record. We are, however, debarred from attempting this, partly on account of the limits of space here, but chiefly because of not knowing where to begin and where to end. Broughton Place Church has always been noted for the number, the ability, and the ready response of its "workers",—a great band of choice Christian hearts who have loyally endeavoured to carry out the command of Christ, "Go work to-day in My vineyard." These have been, and ever will be, even more than the excellence of the pulpit preaching, the source of Congregational strength. There have not merely been two or three during these years specially worthy of praise and remembrance,—one might truthfully say that there have been hundreds, each of whom would merit some notice here but for the reasons mentioned. Their names are written in heaven, and their works follow them. It



would, however, be unpardonable not to refer even in a word, to the two Session Clerks who have done so much for the Congregation in the period under review, — the late Mr Alexander White and Mr R. W. Wallace. Only those behind the scenes know what a burden of duty must necessarily devolve on the Session Clerk of a congregation of the dimensions of Broughton Place, and the amount of congregational machinery which such an official has to keep going smoothly and without cessation. Mr White was, during his long official life in the Congregation, deeply and constantly immersed in its more business side, and by his Christian character he gained and retained to the last the affection and confidence of everyone. And as regards his successor, his praise is in our Church and every place where he is known for his varied Christian services, his liberality, his business qualities, and his unfailing courtesy. More could be said, less could not well be said.

Also it is appropriate to refer to the eminent services of the gentleman who has been for nearly twenty years responsible for the praise in the Congregation, Dr W. B. Ross, Organist.

The Congregation have been exceedingly fortunate in procuring and retaining for so long a period the services of such a master of the art as Dr Ross has proved himself to be. He is not only a musician of the first rank who has carved for himself a brilliant and most creditable musical record, but he is one who understands the place and power of praise in the services of the sanctuary, and who has always endeavoured to make the musical part of the worship an act of homage to Almighty God, and not, as some organists unhappily do, a vulgar artistic display. His relations with the various ministers have always been exceedingly cordial and helpful. Visitors to our Church often remark how well the people sing, and what a fine volume of hearty praise ascends up to God from within the old and hallowed walls. The introduction of the organ in 1890 was viewed with considerable dislike and distrust by some of the more conservative members, but we do not suppose now that any one would care to go back to the pre-organ days after seeing, or rather hearing, the improvement in the praise which the organ has undoubtedly effected.

## A COMMUNION SABBATH IN BROUGHTON PLACE

This little book will doubtless reach a goodly number of sick and aged members of the Congregation, to whom the privilege is not often accorded of being able to be present at the Communion Service. For the sake of those especially we propose to give some account of the Communion Service, by way of refreshing their memories and inviting their prayers and sympathy. In all Christian churches the Communion is a great event, and a red-letter day in the experience of all faithful members. It is not otherwise in Broughton Place. Perhaps the Communion, or the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, may not now be celebrated or dispensed with the same feelings of awe and devotion, and with such a wealth of preparation and of thanksgiving as was customary in the days prior to the abolition of the "Fast day" some twenty years ago; but it is still and must ever be a great and solemn occasion. Think what this

great Christian feast reminds us of ! Through the long centuries it has come down to us from the day of its first institution, historically proving the actual life and testimony of Jesus Christ ; binding his followers together in "one blest chain of loving rite ;" and, amid all the diversities of belief and practice, demonstrating the inherent unity of the Church of God.

The Communion day is certainly a great occasion in Broughton Place Congregation, if for no other reason than on account of the large numbers which it brings together. The attendance averages about 800 at the one and single "table" which is provided. No one can survey that great crowd without sober thoughts. It is certainly one of the largest Communion "tables" in Scotland, or indeed anywhere in Protestant communities. Among such an assembly there are of course varieties of experience, of fitness, of understanding. To some, doubtless, the service stands for little ; there may be no vivid apprehension of its seriousness in the minds of a certain proportion ; but the spiritual atmosphere of Broughton Place Church has prepared and



trained the great majority for worthily participating in the sacred feast. There are many of the ripest of saints here, men and women by the score who daily walk with God. Men of profound intellect also have been at our Communion, like the beloved Principal Cairns, and received the cup with Christian humility from the poor communicant who lives in some lowly court within easy reach of the Church. The Communion, as celebrated in Broughton Place, is a blessed yet scarcely-perceived leveller of social distinctions. The cup passes from lip to lip, reminding us that "we are all one in Christ Jesus."

The environment of our Church is favourable to "worthy communicating." The very position of the building is favourable. There is no noise of passing traffic, the building being almost in a *cul-de-sac*, which, while it does not help to publicity, does materially ensure a perpetual Sabbatic calm. On a sunshiny Sabbath, of which even winter affords a good many specimens, the sunshine penetrates softly through the faintly-coloured windows, suggesting thoughts of peace and goodwill quite appropriate to the occasion. But even



more moving than these external influences are the precious memories which cluster round the sacred walls. What vast companies of good and valiant Christians have tabernacled here during the ninety-three years which have sped their course since the foundation of the Church! Their spirits seem to be with us on these solemn Communion Sundays; at any rate our memories of *them* are very vivid at such times. As we take the sacred emblems into our hands we are stimulated by the remembrance of these departed saints, and we resolve to strive to be eager "followers of those who through faith and patience are now inheriting the promises." But while the memories of the sainted dead are sweet and fragrant at all times, and most of all on a Communion morning, sweeter still are the thoughts of Jesus Christ, "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," and of the triune God, whose worship, like incense, has ascended up to heaven within these walls for nearly a century. Deep in our hearts lies the impelling thought that, with all its faults, our Church has been the presence-chamber of the Most High.

The Communion is dispensed among us with Presbyterian simplicity. Perhaps we are prejudiced, but we think that the very simplicity of it is where its value and impressiveness lie. The ornate Eucharistic service of the Anglican High Church, and the still more elaborate Mass of the Roman Church, are far removed from the original pattern in the upper room at Jerusalem. The Presbyterian form may not be an exact replica of that pattern, but it follows it closely enough to be scriptural, and yet suitable to the circumstances of the times in which we live. The minister in the midst of his supporting body of elders looks grave, and weighed by a sense of responsibility, yet he rejoices in being privileged to be the earthly medium through whom God is to bless His people. The elders also feel the responsibility of their sacred office, and worthily perform their part on the sacred occasion. Indeed the sight of such a goodly band of elders on the platform is a splendid testimony to the loyalty of "fathers and brethren" to the minister, as well as an evidence of the democratic nature of Presbyterian government. All the communicants are

still and attentive, many being engaged in deep devotion and silent contemplation of the meaning and mystery of Calvary's sacrifice; while the children look down from the galleries with wondering interest on their faces.

What emotions stir, or at least ought to stir, those who take part in this great Christian festival! The broken bread and the poured out wine may be only symbols, but they wondrously move the soul all the same. And why should they not? Have we not all been moved at the sight of the faded letters or personal relics of some departed relative or friend? The sacred symbols of bread and wine speak to us audibly enough, and bring our dear Lord wondrously near us, and within the radius of our best affections. According to Scripture and Presbyterian traditions, stress is laid by the presiding minister on the two leading purposes of the Holy Communion :— (1) to keep us in constant memory of Jesus; and (2) to remind us that He is coming again for His people. In addition to dwelling on these two main lines of meditation, we are reminded that such a time is a special occasion for confession, thanksgiving, and consecration.

And so with gladsome praise, fervent prayer, appropriate sermon, and, above all, the silent passing from one to the other of bread and cup, the forenoon hours pass memorably away, leaving impressions which, under God's Spirit, are bound to uplift, purify, and ennoble the after-life. It is impossible to take a prayerful part in the Communion services of Broughton Place Church without feeling a spiritual uplift, and resolving to become a more worthy and consistent member in the coming days.

In Dr Smith's time the Communion service lasted two full hours, consequent on the length of the sermon which he felt constrained to deliver, and the expansion of the other items. The service has now been somewhat shortened, but it has not lost in impressiveness thereby.

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The following was the order of service at the celebration of the Lord's Supper on Sabbath, 1st March 1914, when Mr Black presided:—

Prayer of Invocation.

Praise—Psalm 103, v. 1-5, "*O thou my soul.*"

First Scripture Lesson—Psalm 113.

Praise—Hymn 70, "*We sing the praise of Him who died.*"

Second Lesson—Matthew 26, v. 26-30.

Prayer of Confession, Thanksgiving, and Intercession.

Praise—Paraphrase 2, "*O God of Bethel.*"

Sermon—Psalm 103, v. 5, "Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on High."

Praise—Paraphrase 35, "*'Twas on that night.*"\*

Read warrant for observance of Supper—I. Cor. 11, v. 23-29.

Praise (Congregation seated) — Hymn 306, v. 2, "*O Christ! He is the fountain.*"

v. 3, "*O I am my Beloved's.*"

Dispensation of the sacred elements.

Post-Communion Address.

Praise—Hymn 295, "*Guide me, O thou great Jehovah.*"

Benediction.

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\* This sublime hymn, written by the Rev. John Morrison, Parish Minister of Canisbay, Caithness, has been for a hundred and fifty years the chief, and till a comparatively recent period, the sole Communion hymn of the Scottish churches. It is excelled by none of the modern hymns in its dramatic description of the institution of the Lord's Supper.



*Almighty God, we praise Thee for all Thy wonderful goodness to Broughton Place Church during its long history. Continue to bless Thy people there, its pastor, and all its office-bearers. Make it a great power for righteousness in this city, and a centre of spiritual influence which will change and uplift the lives of many. May the members strive after holiness of life, and be an example to all around. Bless its missionary operations and all its various agencies. Bless all its members and adherents. Consecrate every one to Thy service. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Amen.*













